



The President's Daily Brief

9 February 1971

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Lao Government is moving to strengthen its forces around Long Tieng and Luang Prabang. (Page 1)

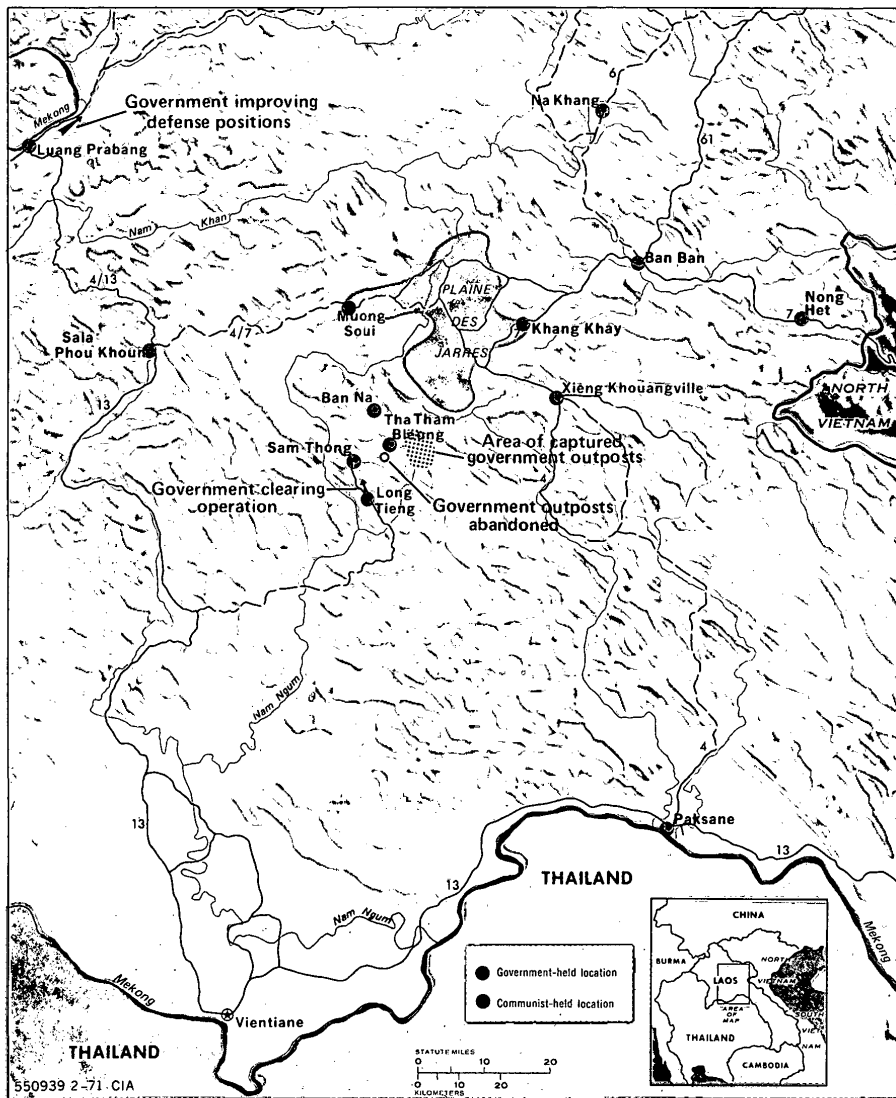
The current South Vietnamese operations in Cambodia are discussed on Page 2.

Satellite photography contains no evidence that the Soviets have begun construction of any SS-9 groups since last June. (Page 3)

Leaders of East Pakistan apparently are considering a declaration of independence. (Page 4)

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LAOS/PLAINE DES JARRES



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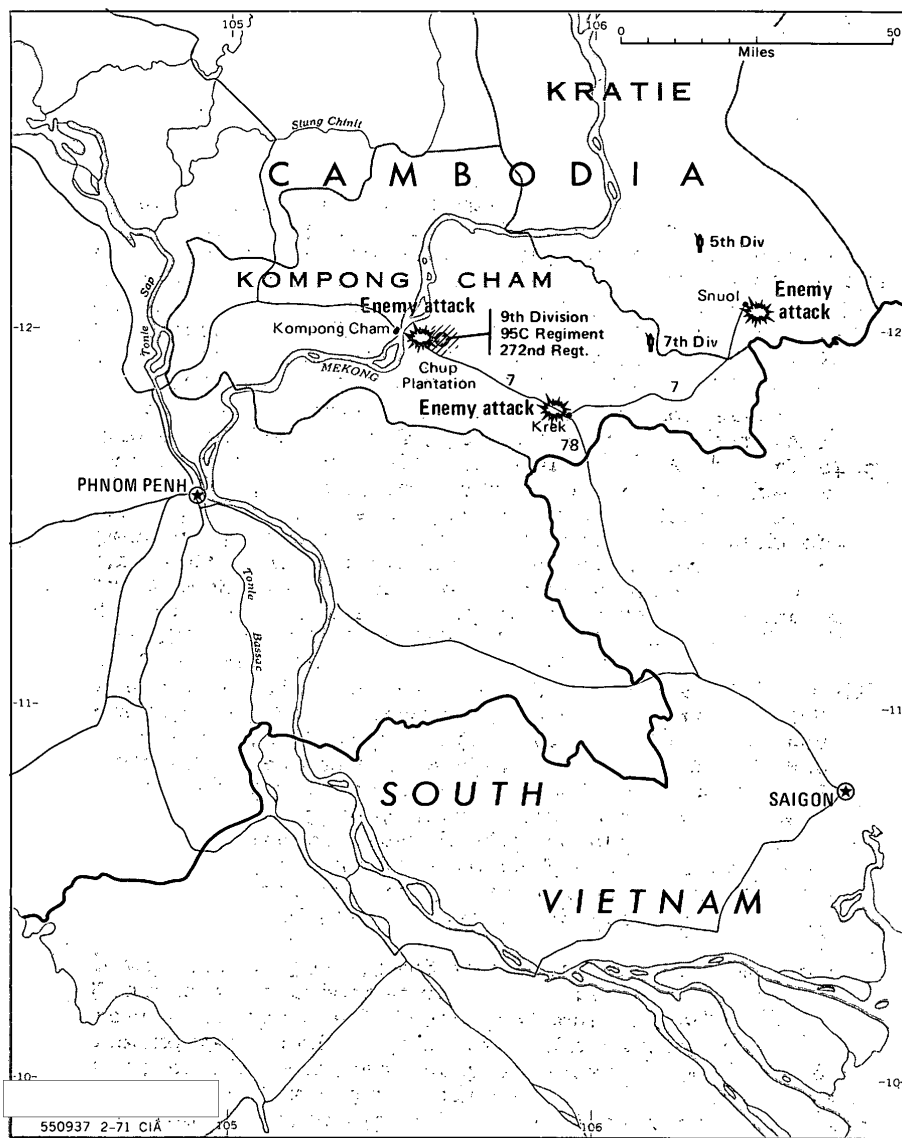
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LAOS

The government has flown two irregular battalions to positions north and northeast of Long Tieng in order to strengthen its defenses around the base. In addition, a 280-man irregular force has launched a clearing operation north and west of Long Tieng toward Sam Thong. This force apparently had no contact with the enemy yesterday, but at least two clashes were reported by other irregular forces northeast of Long Tieng and northwest of Sam Thong.

A total of eight irregular outposts was lost in the fighting around Long Tieng on 7 February. Troops from these outposts are now moving back toward Long Tieng and Tha Tham Bleung. The irregulars were forced to withdraw from two more outposts near Tha Tham Bleung on 7 February, and are joining units elsewhere in the area. Enemy shelling attacks and harassments have continued around Ban Na and Tha Tham Bleung.

The government has also launched an operation to improve the defensive positions around Luang Prabang. Two additional irregular companies have been airlifted into the area. Irregulars have occupied some of the positions on high ground that the Communists had been using to shell government outposts north of the town. Attacks by an estimated two enemy companies against these ridge positions late on 8 February were successfully resisted.




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CAMBODIA - SOUTH VIETNAM

Enemy troops have carried out a series of ground and mortar attacks against the South Vietnamese forces operating since 4 February in the vicinity of the Chup rubber plantation in Kompong Cham Province. These attacks have been repulsed with the help of air and artillery support, and the South Vietnamese claim so far to have killed more than 300 Communists while losing about 40 killed.

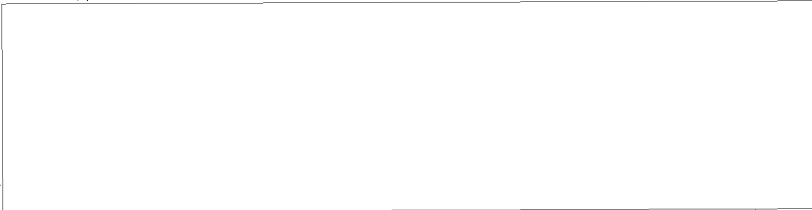
 enemy forces in the Chup area include elements of two regiments--the 272nd and the 95C--from the Viet Cong 9th Division together with the division headquarters.

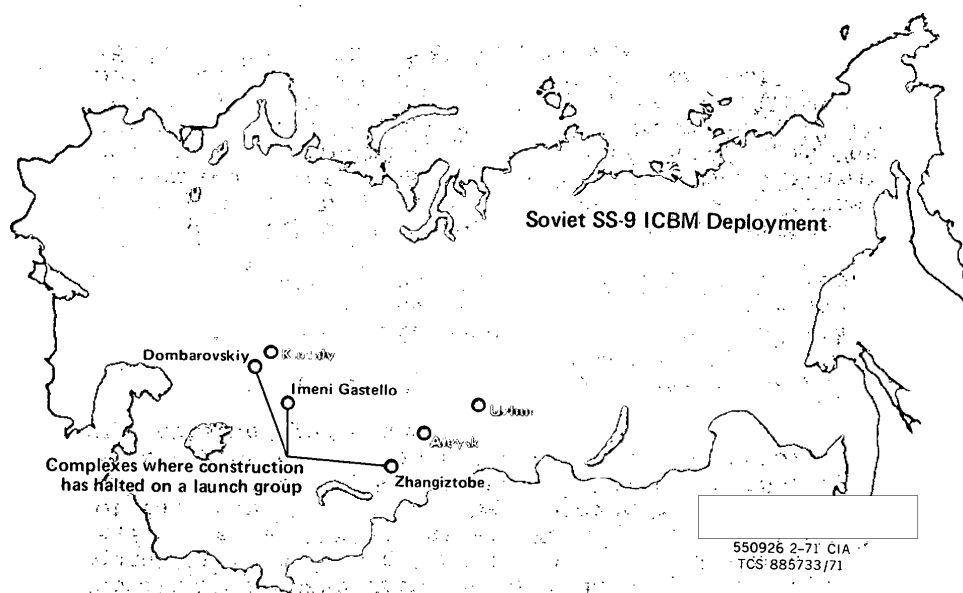
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A Communist mortar attack during the weekend against a South Vietnamese position closer to the border in Kompong Cham Province destroyed a large quantity of fuel and ammunition. This attack was against a regimental command post located just north of the town of Krek, at the junction of Routes 7 and 78. Another position manned by ARVN troops in Kratie Province, a few miles northeast of Snuol, was attacked yesterday.

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Elements of the North Vietnamese 7th Division, are near the Kompong Cham - Kratie border area. The Communists' 5th Division and its three subordinate regiments are within range of the Snuol area.





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USSR

Satellite photography reveals no evidence that the Soviets have begun construction of any SS-9 groups since June 1970. Of groups started earlier, work is continuing on two, which probably will be completed by mid-1972, but construction has stopped at three others.

Satellite photography in January of portions of four of the six SS-9 complexes showed that construction had halted on a group of six silos in the Imeni Gastello complex. Work first began on this group in September 1969, but proceeded at a much slower pace than normal. The group shows no construction progress since it was last photographed in November 1970.

This is the third SS-9 launch group where work recently has been halted. Photography of last November had indicated that construction at two other groups--one at the Dombarovskiy complex and one at Zhangistobe--had been abandoned. These two groups, the last known to be started, were begun in June 1970. The group at the Zhangistobe complex was seen in the latest coverage and again showed no evidence of construction activity. The Dombarovskiy complex was not photographed in January.

The only other complex not covered in January was Aleysk. When this complex was photographed in November, all construction was completed.

There are now 276 SS-9 launchers operational--18 having become operational since December. The current photography showed that work is continuing on 12 additional silos--six in a group at the Ushur complex and six at Kartaly. Both groups probably will be completed by mid-1972, bringing the total SS-9 force to 288 launchers. If construction is resumed at the three groups which are now inactive, the eventual total would be 306 launchers.

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PAKISTAN

The US Consulate General in Dacca has been told that East Pakistani political leader Mujibur Rahman is very pessimistic about chances of reaching agreement on a new constitution with Zulfikar Bhutto, head of West Pakistan's largest party. Mujibur's party, the Awami League (AL), wants a constitution that provides for provincial autonomy but they now expect Bhutto and other Western politicians to block this proposal. The AL will then propose separate constitutions for East and West Pakistan under a loose confederation. If this plan fails, the AL will declare East Pakistan's independence. This message was delivered by Alamgir Rahman, a responsible member of the AL, who also inquired about the US attitude toward a unilateral declaration of independence by East Pakistan.

East Pakistanis have complained for years about West Pakistan exploitation and domination, and sentiment favoring early secession seems to have risen sharply within recent months. It is unlikely that West Pakistani - led armed forces could prevent a final split between the two wings. Indeed, many West Pakistanis consider East Pakistan a burden on the economy, and they too might welcome separation.

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NOTE

USSR-Berlin: Soviet Ambassador Abrasimov was noncommittal about a Western draft for a possible Berlin agreement at yesterday's session of the four-power ambassadorial talks. He did not explicitly reject the Western draft, which was originally tabled at an advisers' meeting on 5 February, but he made it clear that the Soviets will be tabling their own language. It was agreed that the ambassadorial advisers would begin detailed discussions on a working draft later this week, thereafter meeting as often as deemed necessary and useful.

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